

REMARKS

Claims 1-20 are pending in the present application. Claims 4, 6, 8, 9, 15 and 18-20 have been amended. The Specification has been amended. Claims 1-3, 5, 7, 10-14, 16 and 17 have been cancelled. Claims 21-25 have been added. No new matter has been added by way of this amendment. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the prior rejections are respectfully requested.

The Examiner has objected to the Abstract of the Disclosure. In response to this objection, Applicants have submitted a Substitute Abstract which addresses each of the specific points raised by the Examiner. Reconsideration and withdrawal of this ground of rejection are therefore respectfully requested.

The Examiner has object to the drawings (see requirements at page 2 of the Office Action, Figs. 1A-2, 3, 4, 5, 6A, and 8A-9). However, at this time the drawings have not been amended because Applicant requests clarification of the specific objections. For example, what is meant by “in Figures 1A and 2 the line from 23 should be dashed? Accordingly, Applicants request permission to respond to these objections after further input from the Examiner.

The specification has also been objected to on the grounds that it does not conform to 35 U.S.C. §112, 1st ¶. In response to this ground of objection, Applicants have reviewed and revised the specification to place it in conformance with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §112, 1st ¶. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of this ground of rejection are respectfully requested.

The Summary of the Disclosure has also been objected to on the grounds that the description of the invention as claimed and the dependent claims are not commensurate in scope. In response to this ground of objection, Applicants have reviewed and revised the specification commensurate with the objections under 35 U.S.C. §112, 1st ¶ such that the description of the invention as claimed and the dependent claims are now commensurate in scope. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of this ground of rejection are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-20 stand objected to because of certain informalities. According to the Examiner, in claim 1, line 2, “which faces the wearer” should be --which faces a wearer in use--. In addition, the Examiner is requiring alternative language in claims 19 and 20. Claim 1 has been canceled and claims 19 and 20 have been amended to address the objection raised by the Examiner. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are also requested.

Claims 1-11 and 17-18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, 2nd ¶, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. In response to this ground of rejection, Applicants have amended the claims, where appropriate, in a manner which addresses and is believed to resolve each of the cited informalities. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-6 and 11-13 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by *The P&G Company*, (EP ‘314). Claims 12-16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §1029b) as being

anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,405,310 to *Karami*. Claims 1, 7, 9-14, 16-17 and 19-20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,460,624 to *Ahr et al.*, while claims 15-18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious over the same reference. Claims 1-12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. H1724 to *Ahr*. These several rejection are traversed.

Newly added independent claim 21 corresponds to original dependent claim 11 (now canceled), but is further limited to clarify the function of the second adhesive means (adhesive layer 28 shown in Fig. 1(c) of the drawings). With the second adhesive means, the absorbent article of the invention can be secured inside of the other absorbent article, even when the covering sheet is not removed. More specifically, since the second adhesive means is disposed such that it faces away from the covering sheet, it is unnecessary to establish different levels of adhesive forces between the first and second adhesive means. In contrast, if the second adhesive means were disposed such that it faced the covering sheet, then the adhesive force of the second adhesive means would be required to be weaker than that of the first adhesive means to prevent the covering sheet from being accidentally removed (see page 8, lines 12 - 17 of the specification). None of the cited references disclose adhesive means as set forth in newly added independent claim 21.

Newly added independent claims 22 and 24 respectively correspond to originally filed dependent claims 14 and 17 (now canceled). Claims 22 and 24, however, are further limited to clarify that the second adhesive means sticks much stronger to the covering sheet than the first adhesive means, but will not stick strongly to the other absorbent article once the covering sheet has

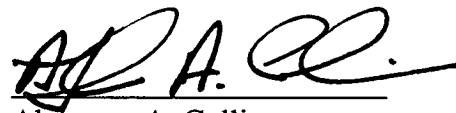
been removed. However, neither *Karami* '31.0 nor *Ahr* '624 discloses such second adhesive means as described in new claims 22 and 24.

In sum, none of the cited references teach or suggest, either individually or in combination, the invention as set forth in newly added independent claims 21, 22 and 24. Accordingly, in view of the differences between the present invention and the cited reference, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectively requested.

In light of the patentability of independent claims 21, 22 and 24, for the reasons above, dependent claims 4, 6, 8, 9, 15, 18-20, 23 and 25 are patentable over the prior art of record.

Each and every point raised in the Office Action dated August 30, 2001 has been addressed on the basis of the above remarks. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested. However, should the Examiner believe that direct contact with the Applicants' attorney would advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number given below.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A.A. Collins', written over a horizontal line.

Alphonso A. Collins
Registration No. 43,559
Attorney for Applicant(s)

DARBY & DARBY
805 Third Avenue
New York, New York 10022
(212) 527-7700

EXPRESS MAIL CERTIFICATE

Date 11/29/01 Label No. EU 004808637 US

I hereby certify that, on the date indicated above, this paper or fee was deposited with the U.S. Postal Service and that it was addressed for delivery to the Assistant Commissioner for Patents, Washington, DC 20231 by "Express Mail Post Office to Addressee" service.

A. DiMillo A. DiMillo
Name (Print) Signature

PLEASE CHARGE ANY DEFICIENCY UP TO \$300.00
OR CREDIT ANY EXCESS IN FUTURE FEES DUE
WITH RESPECT TO THIS APPLICATION TO OUR
DEPOSIT ACCOUNT NO. 04-010



Customer No.



07278

PATENT TRADEMARK OFFICE

Docket No: 2309/0F390

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of: Yoshihisa FUJIOKA et al.

Serial No.: 09/274,197

Art Unit: 3734

Filed: March 22, 1999

Examiner: REICHLE, K.

For: ABSORBENT ARTICLE FOR PREVENTION OF SIDEWARD LEAK

November 29, 2001

MARK-UP FOR AMENDMENT OF NOVEMBER 29, 2001
PURSUANT TO 37 C.F.R. §1.121

Commissioner of Patents
2900 Crystal Drive
Arlington, VA 22202-3513

Sir:

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Delete page 1, and insert the following new page 1:

ABSORBENT ARTICLE FOR PREVENTION
OF SIDEWARD LEAK

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to an absorbent article, including urine-absorbent pads, which is used inside a disposable diaper, and a sanitary napkin which is laid on top of the article to provide an absorbent article which exhibits excellent liquid-absorbing properties.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

A common means for caring for individuals suffering from incontinence is the use of an absorbent article, such as ⁷a urine-absorbent pad, worn inside a disposable diaper. A conventional urine-absorbent pad contains a facing layer and a backing layer, with an absorbent core interposed between the layers. The facing layer, which faces the wearer [in] during use, is liquid-permeable. The backing layer, which faces the disposable diaper [in] during use, is liquid-impermeable. The absorbent core is formed from crushed pulp or a mixture of crushed pulp and super absorbent polymer (SAP). In addition, the urine-absorbent pad has an adhesive layer which sticks to the inside of the disposable diaper [so as to prevent] for preventing the urine-absorbent pad from slipping out of place in the disposable diaper.

The urine-absorbent pad receives a liquid insult directly in the case of an incontinence episode, and has the capacity to retain an amount of urine excreted by an adult during one or two incontinence episodes. The pad must be replaced as it is saturated with urine, which depends on the frequency of episodes, in order to prevent liquid from moving to the disposable diaper. Thus, it is possible to avoid the replacement of the disposable diaper by frequently changing the wet pad. However, this is not always possible, such as during periods of sleep, when the urine-absorbent pad

is left in place for a long time. After repeated, liquid insults, the urine-absorbent pad cannot absorb additional liquid, which results in excess liquid leaking from the pad.

The problem is that the excess liquid flows to the side or periphery

Delete page two and insert the following new page 2:

(which is in contact with the groin) rather than to the center of the disposable diaper (absorbent area of the disposable diaper), because the backing layer of the urine-absorbent pad is impermeable to liquid and faces the center of the disposable diaper. The periphery of the conventional disposable diaper does not [sufficiently] absorb urine sufficiently, thereby causing it to leak at the sides of the diaper, which results in wet clothes or sheets. This same problem also occurs if two sanitary napkins are worn together on top of each other.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention provides an absorbent article that prevents liquid from leaking from the sides of the article.

The invention further provides an absorbent article which efficiently absorbs liquid when used in combination with another absorbent article.

In one embodiment of the invention, a first absorbent article is worn inside of a second absorbent article, wherein the first article contains a liquid-permeable facing layer which is in contact with the wearer, and a backing layer which is in contact with a second absorbent article[.], Here, the backing layer [being] is formed from a liquid-impermeable sheet and [having] has at least

one opening made therein[, and] In addition, an absorbent core is interposed between the facing layer and the backing layer.

In another embodiment of the invention, a first absorbent article is worn inside of a second absorbent article, wherein the first article contains a liquid-permeable facing layer which is in contact with the wearer, and a liquid-permeable backing layer which is in contact with the second article, and an absorbent core interposed between the facing layer and the backing layer.

The absorbent article of the present invention is designed [to be worn] for wear inside of another absorbent article such as a disposable diaper, urine-absorbent pad, or sanitary napkin. The absorbent article absorbs a certain amount of liquid by the absorbent core but permits excess liquid which remains unabsorbed by the core to pass through the backing layer for absorption by another absorbent article such as a

Delete page 3 and insert the following new page 3:

disposable diaper. Accordingly, the leakage of excess liquid from the side of the absorbent article is prevented.

The absorbent article can be modified such that the backing layer is provided with a liquid-impermeable covering sheet that can be removed at any time when necessary. With the covering sheet on, it stops the flow of urine; with the covering sheet removed, it permits the passage of urine. When frequent [changing] changes of the absorbent article [is] are possible, such as during the daytime, it may be used with the covering sheet attached to prevent frequent replacement of the second absorbent article[, such as] (e.g., a disposable diaper)[,] used in combination with absorbent

article. When frequent [changing is] changes are unlikely, such as during periods of sleep, the absorbent article may be used with the covering sheet removed, thereby absorbing liquid efficiently and securely in combination with another absorbent article.

The absorbent article can be modified such that the backing layer is provided with an adhesive means for fastening the backing layer to another absorbent article. In such a structure, the absorbent article will not slip out of place, and the movement of liquid to the other absorbent article is ensured.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Fig. 1(A) is a perspective view showing a urine-absorbent pad as an example of an absorbent article according to the invention[.];

Fig. 1(B) is a plan view of the urine-absorbent pad shown in **Fig. 1(A)**, as viewed from a backing layer, with a covering sheet attached[.];

Fig. 1(C) is a plan view of the urine-absorbent pad shown in **Fig. 1(B)**, as viewed from the backing layer, with the covering sheet removed[.];

Fig. 2 is a perspective view which illustrates how the urine-absorbent pad of **Fig. 1(A)** is used in combination with a disposable diaper[.];

Fig. 3 is a plan view which illustrates how the urine-absorbent pad shown in **Fig. 1(A)** is used in combination with a disposable diaper[.];

Fig. 4 is a schematic sectional view taken along the line IV-IV in **Fig. 3**[.];

Delete page 4 and insert the following new page 4:

Fig. 5 is a perspective view of the urine-absorbent pad shown in **Fig. 1(A)** which is folded for use by a man, with its shape [so] modified so as to enclose a penis[.];

Fig. 6(A) is a plan view of a urine-absorbent pad as another example of the absorbent article according to the invention, as viewed from a backing layer, with a covering sheet attached[.];

Fig. 6(B) is a plan view of the urine-absorbent pad shown in **Fig. 6(A)**, as viewed from the backing layer, with the covering sheet removed[.];

Figs. 7(A) and 7(B) are perspective views of examples of openings[.];

Fig. 8(A) is a plan view of a urine-absorbent pad as another example of the absorbent article according to the present invention, as viewed from a backing layer, with a covering sheet attached[.];

Fig. 8(B) is a plan view of the urine-absorbent pad shown in **Fig. 8(A)**, as viewed from the backing layer, with the covering sheet removed[.]; and

Fig. 9 is a plan view of another embodiment of the urine-absorbent pad shown in **Fig. 8(A)**, with the covering sheet removed.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

A urine-absorbent pad, as an example of one embodiment of the absorbent article according to the invention, is shown in **Fig. 1(A)** (perspective view), **Fig. 1(B)** (plan view as viewed from a backing layer, with a covering sheet attached), and **Fig. 1(C)** (plan view as viewed from the backing layer, with the covering sheet removed).

The urine-absorbent pad **20** comprises a liquid-permeable facing layer **21** which faces the wearer [in] during use, and a backing layer **22**, which faces a disposable diaper [in] during use, and an absorbent core **23** which is interposed between the two layers.

The facing layer **21** can be made from a nonwoven fabric of hydrophilic fibers hydrophobic fibers containing a hydrophilic surfactant, or the like[.,].

Delete page 5 and insert the following new page 5:

[which] The facing layer **21** can be formed by various processes such as point bonding, through-air bonding, spun bonding, or spun lacing.

The backing layer **22** is made of a liquid-impermeable, breathable sheet of resin, such as polyolefin.

The absorbent core **23** is formed from crushed pulp or a mixture of crushed pulp and Super-Absorbent Polymer (SAP), and is covered with an absorbing sheet **23a** such as tissue. (See **Fig. 4.**) The /Sap can be made of polyacrylic acid, sodium polyacrylate, polyacrylamide, polyacrylonitrile, polyvinyl alcohol, an addition polymer of maleic anhydride, a polyether, a condensed polymer, a polysaccharide such as starch or cellulose, a protein such as collagen and the like. Examples of the SAPs include a cross-linked compound of sodium polyacrylate, a graft copolymer of starch having sodium polyacrylate and a graft copolymer of cellulose having polyacrylonitrile chains.

The absorbent core **23** is rectangular in shape as indicated by the dotted lines in **Figs. 1(B) and 1(C)**. It may also take on an hourglass shape. With the absorbent core **23** interposed

between the facing layer **21** and the backing layer **22**, the layers are then bonded together with a hot-melt adhesive, or the like, along the periphery of the absorbent core **23**.

As used herein, the "absorbing area" refers to the area which is surrounded by the dotted lines in **Figs. 1(B)** and **1(C)** and the area of the absorbent core **23**.

The urine-absorbent pad **20** has elastic members **24** which are disposed between the facing layer **21** and the backing layer **22** and extend in the lengthwise direction (**Y** direction) of the urine-absorbent pad **20**. The elastic members **24** exist in side areas where the absorbent core **23** is absent (i.e., outside of the absorbing area in the widthwise direction (**X** direction) of the urine-absorbent pad **20**). The elastic members **24** are bonded to the facing layer **21** and the backing layer **22** [in its] when stretched [state] in the **Y** direction (with a certain [per cent] elongation percentage). In their free state, they shrink in the **Y** direction, causing the facing layer **21** and the backing layer **22** to form gathers **25** on both [the] side areas of the urine-absorbent pad **20** in the **X** direction.

Delete page 6, and insert the following new page 6:

As shown in **Fig. 1(C)**, the backing layer **22** is made of a liquid-impermeable resin sheet and has openings **22a**, through which openings the absorbing sheet **23a** (e.g., tissue) covering the absorbent core **23** is exposed. In this embodiment, the openings **22a** constitute liquid-passing areas indicated by **(a)**.

The openings **22a** (or the liquid-passing areas **(a)**) are arranged side by side approximately at the center of the absorbing area in the widthwise direction (**X** direction) and are

elongated parallel to each other in the lengthwise direction (Y direction). In other words, they are situated substantially at the center of the absorbing area. The area of the openings 22a is smaller than that of the absorbing area.

The backing layer 22 has an adhesive layer 26 as an adhesive means. The adhesive layer 26 is formed on the backing layer 22 in such a way as to surround the openings 22a individually. This adhesive layer 26 aids in fastening a covering sheet 27 to the outside of the backing layer 22, as shown in Fig. 1(B). Thus the covering sheet 27 closes the openings 22a. In other words, the adhesive layer 26 surrounds the openings 22a completely, and the covering sheet 27 is bonded to this adhesive layer 26. Therefore, with the covering sheet 27 attached, the liquid-passing areas (a) are closed and the backing layer 22 of the urine-absorbent pad 20 prevents liquid from passing through.

The covering sheet 27 is made of a liquid-impermeable and breathable sheet of resin such as polyolefin, like the backing layer 22. The adhesive layer 26 is formed from a gum adhesive or acrylic resin[,] to permit removal of the covering sheet 27 [to be removed] at any time from the backing layer 22, and retains a certain adhesive power even after the covering sheet 27 has been removed. When the urine-absorbent pad 20 is used in combination with a disposable diaper, the adhesive layer 26 (with the

Delete page 7 and insert the following new page 7:

covering sheet 27 removed) adheres to the inside of the disposable diaper[, thereby preventing] As a result, the urine-absorbent pad 20 is prevented from slipping out of place. In addition, because the

urine-absorbent pad **20** is in contact with the disposable diaper, the passage of urine to the disposable diaper is secured.

The covering sheet **27** has a tab **27a** formed at its end. This tab **27a** is not bonded to the backing layer **22**.

The urine-absorbent pad **20** is used in combination with a disposable diaper **1** (shown in Figs. 2 and 3) one over the other, with the former placed inside of the latter. The disposable diaper **1** has the shape of an hourglass and consists of a front part **1A** (faces the abdomen of the wearer in use), a rear part **1B** (faces the hip or back of the wearer in use), and a middle part **1C** (faces the groin in use).

The disposable diaper **1** has a liquid-permeable inner layer **2** and a liquid-impermeable outer layer **3**, with an absorbent body **4** interposed between them. The absorbent body **4**, which has the shape of an hourglass, is formed from crushed pulp or a mixture of crushed pulp and SAP and is enclosed with an absorbing sheet such as tissue.

The middle part **1C** of the disposable diaper **1** has longitudinally extending elastic bodies **5** at its side edges and between the inner layer **2** and the outer layer **3**, so that the elastic bodies **5** form gathers **6** when they shrink.

The inner layer **2** of the rear part **1B** has fasteners (hooks) **7** at its edges. The outer layer **3** of the front part **1A** also has fasteners (piles) **8**. To wear the disposable diaper **1**, the fasteners **7** and **8** are engaged with each other around the waist of the wearer.

Although the disposable diaper **1** described herein is an example of the open type, the urine-absorbent pad **20** of the invention may also be used in combination with a disposable diaper

of the pants type in which the front part **1A** and the rear part **1B** are bonded together at their edges.

If the user can frequently change the absorbent pad, for example, during the daytime, the urine-absorbent pad **20** is used with the covering sheet **27**

Delete page 11 and insert the following new page 11:

reference to **Fig. 4**. The excess urine which is not absorbed by the absorbent core **23** of the urine-absorbent pad **20** passes through the openings **22a** to be absorbed by the absorbent body **4** of the disposable diaper **1**. Thus, it is possible to cope with frequent episodes of incontinence.

In another embodiment of the absorbent article of the invention, the urine-absorbent pad may be modified as shown in **Figs. 6(A)** and **6(B)**. **Fig. 6(A)** is a plan view of the urine-absorbent pad, as viewed from the backing layer. **Fig. 6(B)** is a plan view of the urine-absorbent pad, with the covering sheet removed.

A urine-absorbent pad **30** shown in **Fig. 6(A)** is similar in structure to the urine-absorbent pad **20** shown in **Fig. 1(A)**. It has a facing layer and a backing layer, with an absorbent core interposed between them, and has gathers (formed by elastic members extending in the Y direction) on both of the side areas thereof. Therefore, it is made of the same materials and is used in the same manner as the absorbent pads described above.

The urine-absorbent pad **30** has a backing layer **31** which is made of liquid-impermeable resin film (such as polyolefin), similar to the backing layer **22** of the urine-absorbent pad **20**. The backing layer **31** has a number of openings **31a** which almost entirely cover the absorbent core (or absorbing area) [almost entirely], as shown in **Fig. 6(B)**. In other words,

this embodiment is constructed such that the liquid passing area (b) substantially coincides [substantially] with the absorbing area (the area containing the absorbent core). Incidentally, the openings 31a may be formed in the entire area of the backing layer 31 although they are confined to the absorbing area in [the] this particular embodiment.

Each of the openings 31a are preferably circular, with a diameter larger than 0.5 mm, preferably larger than 1 mm. The openings 31a are preferably arranged with a pitch greater than 1 mm, preferably greater than 1.5 mm. The advantage of establishing the size and pitch of the openings 31a as described above is that the liquid-passing area (b) of the urine-absorbent pad 30 can be recognized visibly. This avoids the possibility of mistaking an ordinary urine-absorbent pad, in which the backing layer does not have the liquid-passing area, for one of the invention.

Page 12, delete the first full paragraph and insert the following new first paragraph:

In the case of the urine-absorbent pad 30 in which the openings 31a are [so] formed so as to almost entirely cover the absorbent core (or the absorbing area) [almost entirely], it is necessary to provide an adhesive layer 32 as described below to ensure proper adhesion between the backing layer 31 of the urine-absorbent pad 30 and the inner layer 2 of the disposable diaper 1. Thus, the adhesive layer 32 is preferably formed in the absorbing area (or the area in which the absorbent core exits). Assuming that the area in which the adhesive layer 32 is formed has dimensions of L1 by W1, the length L1 (Y direction) should be equal to or smaller than the length L0 of the absorbent core but greater than 50% of the length L0. In addition, it is preferred that the total area of the adhesive layer 32 is less than 60% of the area of the absorbent core in order to ensure

the smooth flow of urine from the backing layer 31 to the disposable diaper 1.

Page 13, delete the first full paragraph and insert the following new first paragraph:

The openings may be positioned and shaped as shown in **Figs. 7(A)** and **7(B)**. In **Fig. 7(A)**, comparatively large round (or elliptic) holes **31b** are formed in a line extending in the lengthwise direction (Y direction) and approximately at the center of the urine-absorbent pad. In **Fig. 7(B)**, one large hole **31c** is formed almost equal to the absorbing area (or the area in which the absorbent core exists).

Delete the last line on page 13. ✓

Page 14, delete the first 2 lines and insert the following new lines:

Incidentally, the coating pattern of the first adhesive layer 42 is not limited to a striped pattern, but may take on any shape, such as[, for example,] dots or spirals. ✓

Page 14, delete the third full paragraph and insert the following new third paragraph:

The first adhesive layer **42** and the second adhesive layers **43**, as described above, prevent the covering sheet **44** from inadvertently being removed or [peeling] peeled off, because the side portions of the covering sheet **44** are attached to the backing layer **41** by the second adhesive layers **43**. When the covering sheet **44** is removed from the backing layer **41**, the first adhesive layer **42** (in a striped pattern) appears at the center (in the widthwise direction) of the backing layer **41** and

adheres to the inside of the disposable diaper **1**, thereby preventing the urine-absorbent pad

Page 15, delete the second full paragraph and insert the following new second paragraph:

A third adhesive layer **45** as a third adhesive means may be formed on the covering sheet **44** as shown in **Fig. 8(A)**. When the urine-absorbent pad **40** is used with the covering sheet **44** attached, and in combination with the disposable diaper **1**, the inner layer **2** of the diaper **1** is fastened (bonded) to the third adhesive layer **45** so that the urine-absorbent pad **40** stays in position. It is important that the adhesive force of the third adhesive layer **45**, when applied to the inner layer **2**, is weaker than that of the second adhesive layers **43** applied to the covering sheet **44**. This embodiment aids in preventing inadvertent removal of the covering sheet **44** [from inadvertent removal] from the backing layer **41** when the urine-absorbent pad **40** is removed from the disposable diaper **1**.

Page 16, delete the last paragraph and insert the following paragraph:

As used herein, “comprises” and all its grammatical forms specifies the presence of stated features, integers, steps or components, but [dose] does not preclude the presence or addition of one or more other features, integers, steps, components or groups thereof.

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.121 as follows (see the accompanying “marked up” version pursuant to 1.121):

Cancel claims 1-3, 5, 7, 10-14, 16 and 17.

4. (Amended) The absorbent article of Claim [1] 21, wherein the opening is located [in] within an absorbing area of the article which corresponds to a plan configuration of the absorbent core.

6. (Amended) The absorbent article of Claim 4, wherein the backing layer has a plurality of the openings [are arranged] substantially at the center of the absorbing area.

8. (Amended) The absorbent article of Claim 6, wherein the first adhesive means is located [in] within the absorbing area[, wherein the adhesive means] and surrounds the openings.

9. (Amended) The absorbent article of Claim [7] 21, wherein the first adhesive means is an adhesive [applied to the backing layer].

15. (Amended) The absorbent article of Claim [14] 22, wherein the first adhesive means is an adhesive in a striped pattern.

18. (Amended) The absorbent article of Claim [17] 24, wherein the first adhesive means is an adhesive in a striped pattern.

19. (Amended) The absorbent article of Claim [14] 23, wherein the covering sheet comprises a third adhesive means[, said third adhesive means exhibiting] which exhibits an adhesive force to another [absorbing] absorbent article when the absorbent article is [contacted with the another absorbing] applied to the other absorbent article without removing the covering sheet,

wherein the adhesive force of the third adhesive means to another absorbent article is weaker than the adhesive force of the second adhesive means to the covering sheet.

20. (Amended) The absorbent article of Claim [17] 25, wherein the covering sheet comprises a third adhesive means[, said third adhesive means exhibiting] which exhibits an adhesive force to [another absorbing] the other absorbent article when the absorbent article is [contacted with the another absorbing] applied to the other absorbent article without removing the covering sheet,

wherein the adhesive force of the third adhesive means to the [another
- absorbing] other absorbent article is weaker than the adhesive force of the second
adhesive means to the covering sheet.

Respectfully submitted,



Alphonso A. Collins
Registration No. 43,559
Attorney for Applicant(s)

3726

DARBY & DARBY
805 Third Avenue
New York, New York 10022
(212) 527-7700

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

An absorbent article [to be worn] for wear inside of another absorbent article, which has a liquid-permeable facing layer that faces the wearer, a backing layer that faces another absorbent article[,]. The [the] backing layer is formed from a liquid-impermeable sheet and [having] has at least one opening made therein. [or, alternatively] Alternatively, the backing layer is formed from a liquid-permeable sheet[,], and an absorbent core which is interposed between the facing layer and the backing layer.

IN THE ABSTRACT:

In response to the requirement on page 1 of the Office Action, a Substitute
Abstract of The Disclosure is submitted on a separate page attached hereto (see the
accompanying marked up version).

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend the specification pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.121 as follows (see the
accompanying "marked up" version pursuant to 1.121):

Delete page 1, and insert the following new page 1:

**ABSORBENT ARTICLE FOR PREVENTION
OF SIDEWARD LEAK**

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

a | The present invention relates to an absorbent article, including urine-absorbent
pads, which is used inside a disposable diaper, and a sanitary napkin which is laid on top of the
article to provide an absorbent article which exhibits excellent liquid-absorbing properties.